

Wayland, Feb. 21st 1871.

Friend Higginson,

I thank you heartily for your pamphlet on "The Sympathy of Religions." I always like what you write; which I consider to be a sign that I am in a very healthy state of mind. But I was very particularly pleased with the aforesaid pamphlet. Such largeness of thought and of sympathy, so much learning so eloquently uttered, are rarely found.

I think he is the greatest benefactor of the world, at the present day, who helps men to outgrow the sectarianism of Christianity.

Perhaps you will be tempted to ask, "Since you say you always

like what I write, pray tell me how you liked my biography of yourself.

To tell you the plain truth, friend Higginson, I have never read a single word of it. I have never been able to get up the courage to do it.

To read my own biography seems too much like being dissected before I am dead. I have always been talking, more or less, to the public, but I have never talked about myself. And I am strangely sensitive about any personal introduction to the public.

I do not pretend to defend this state of feeling, but it exists, and I cannot get rid of it.

That recalls to my memory how my exclusiveness was disturbed by your wishing to read my letters

as a help to writing my biography.

How should you like to have me leave you my letters, as a legacy? I have written a great many, all improvisations, and forgotten as soon as written. I don't know whether the public would take any interest in any of them. It is barely possible that enough might be selected from them to make a small volume that would have a moderate sale. If so, I should like to have you edit them, and after taking reasonable compensation for your trouble, devote any sum that might be left to the "Free Religious Association", or any other association of similar purpose and tendency.

It would be a pleasant thought to me that I could thus continue to help a little the cause of truth and freedom, when the hand

Mrs. L. M. Child
Her mrs.

that now obeys the impulse of my
mind shall have become ashes.

Always yours, with cordial
respect and affection,

L. Maria Child.



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